

Caring for your Herbst

- One of the most common problems with this treatment is the discrepancy that occurs when the upper teeth protrude beyond the lower. Ordinarily when we see patients with the upper jaw protruding, we tend to think that the upper jaw and teeth are too far forward; but more often than not, this condition is due to a small lower jaw that is further back than it should be. With these patients, we would like to encourage the lower jaw to catch up in growth, and appliances like the Herbst allow this to happen.
- At first, your mouth will feel unusually full and speaking will be awkward. But if you practice reading aloud, your ordinary speech will return quickly. You may also notice more saliva than normal, but this will decrease as you become accustomed to the appliance.
- Even though the Herbst appliance prevents the lower jaw from moving backward, opening and closing movements still occur easily and patients do not have problems chewing their food with their lower jaw in this new position. Take caution when opening your mouth very wide, for example when yawning, it may unhinge the appliance arms.
- Do not play with your appliance using your tongue or fingers. Most appliances are damaged by these habits more than from anything else.
- As with all kinds of braces, patients need to be careful about what they eat. Cold foods, for instance popsicles, will freeze the cement and loosen the appliance. Sticky foods, like bubble gum, will pull the appliance away from your teeth. Hard foods like crisp vegetables will bend and loosen the appliance too. So please stay away from these foods while in orthodontic treatment.
- Your Herbst appliance will be checked and adjusted at your appointments. If between appointments you develop some sores on your cheeks, please do not attempt to adjust the appliance yourself. Call for an appointment so that Dr. Lembck can make the necessary adjustments for you.